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# Elmer Rice On The Federal Theatre Project

## FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT FOR NEW YORK CITY

November 20th, 1935.

Mr. Norman Rivkin, Editor  
The Screen Guilds' Magazine  
1655 North Cherokee Avenue  
Hollywood, California.

My dear Mr. Rivkin:

I have read with great interest the articles in the November number of *The SCREEN GUILDS' MAGAZINE* relating to the Federal Theatre Project, particularly the article entitled, "An Axe to Cut Actors' Salaries?" The editorial raises several interesting and important questions and I take the liberty of asking the courtesy of your columns, in order to attempt to answer these questions and to clarify the general situation with respect to the Federal Theatre Project.

While I am addressing you in my official capacity as Regional Director for New York, I should like to make it clear to you and your readers that I am really speaking as a fellow member of the writing craft and one who is particularly interested in the organizational problems of professional theatre workers. I want to remind you that I was one of the founders of The Screen Writers' Guild back in 1921 along with Frank Woods, Thompson Buchanan, Rob Wagner, Waldemar Young, Albert Le Vino, and others. I made several drafts of proposed standard agreements for screen writers but at that time, the organization was not strong enough to put them into effect.

Also, I was one of the organizers of the Dramatists' Guild. I have been on the board of directors for eight or ten years and have had a great deal to do with the writing and enforcement of the present minimum basic agreement. The point I am trying to make is that I have always been a militant champion of the rights of labor and that this letter must be read as emanating from one who is primarily interested in improving the conditions of professional theatre workers.

Accordingly, I should like to make the following points in connection with your editorial:

1. The Federal Theatre Project wage-scale for New York ranges from \$60.50 to \$103.40 per month (not \$30.00 to \$94.00 as your editorial states). All actors, stage hands and writers working on the New York projects are classi-

fied as professional or technical workers and receive the top wage of \$103.40. It must also be borne in mind:

(a) That the projects are written up for six months and will probably be extended to June 30, 1936, so that workers will have security of employment for that period at least.

(b) That workers receive full pay for rehearsals, as well as performances, and

(c) that in most instances, less than the customary eight performances per week will be required, the practical result of which is a shortening of the hours of work.

But I agree with you entirely that it is important to maintain wage standards and that even the minimum standards set by Equity are none too high. I must point out, however, that theatre workers are receiving the highest wage and the most favorable conditions permissible under the law. In addition, the average theatre worker will have a larger aggregate income working for a six months' period under the Federal Project, than he would have working for a similar period under the hazardous and uncertain conditions of private employment.

2. Your editorial suggests that nothing is being done for playwrights. This is far from being the case. Both Mrs. Flanagan and myself are professional playwrights and have been deeply concerned from the beginning about providing employment for the fellow members of our profession. The point is that due to a technicality of the law, they cannot be employed as playwrights without surrendering to the United States Government the title to any plays that they may write during the period of their employment. For this reason, we are employing playwrights as publicity writers, play readers and research workers, at the professional scale of \$103.40 per month. Since the hours of employment are relatively short, these writers will have ample spare time in which to continue with their work of play writing. In addition, the Federal Theatre Project is making provision on each project for a sufficient sum of money to pay moderate rentals for plays which are presented, thus modifying the policy heretofore in effect, of producing only plays which were free of royalty.

3. Am I wrong in detecting an inconsistency in your position with re-

## A Letter From Elmer Rice

. . . Who answers the editorial, "An Axe to Cut Actors' Salaries?" which appeared in the last issue of this publication.

spect to managers? In one paragraph you imply that professional managers will use the W. P. A.'s wage-scale as a standard for wages in private employment and in the next paragraph you criticize the Federal Theatre Project for not having professional managers as its administrators. Two facts are relevant here:

(a) At my request, Dr. Henry Moskowitz, Executive Secretary of the League of New York Theatres (which includes nearly all the important producing managers) has assured the stage unions that the W. P. A. wage-scale will not be used by the managers as a basis for future negotiations with the unions.

(b) The League of New York Theatres, with the consent and cooperation of the Dramatists' Guild, the Actors Equity Association, the Stage Hands Union and the Scenic Artists Union, is sponsoring, under the auspices of the Federal Theatre Project, a Tryout Theatre in the outlying boroughs of New York City, with the understanding that if the plays tried out are subsequently produced on Broadway all union conditions will be met by the managers.

4. As your editorial suggests, the Federal Theatre Project has been in constant touch with all the theatrical unions and has, so far, worked in complete harmony with them. The following letter has been sent to Mr. Harry L. Hopkins, Works Progress administrator:

"We, the undersigned union representatives, wish to express our endorsement of the Federal Theatre Plan now going forward in New York City. May we suggest, however, that your order making November 1st Home Relief registration a deadline for placement on projects be further interpreted, as follows: persons who were eligible for Home Relief before November 1st shall be considered eligible for placement on the Federal Theatre Project without going through Home Relief, when and if

(Continued on Page 18)

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# The Authors' League Guilds

NEW members of The Screen Writers' Guild may be uncertain of the relationship between the Guild and the Authors' League of America. The League is the parent organization of The Screen Writers' Guild, the Dramatists' Guild, and the Authors' Guild. Each of the three is autonomous, and is concerned solely with the economics and ethics of its own field of writing. As Ernest Pascal has observed, The Screen Writers' Guild is "the collective business brain of the screen writer."

The Dramatists' Guild is likewise the business brain of the playwright. About ten years ago, the Dramatists' Guild developed into its present form by winning a hard struggle with theatrical producers. As a result, there came into being the Minimum Basic Agreement, a contract between every play producer

in New York and the Guild. It clearly defines the rights of producers, and all those who write or compose material for the stage. The harmony that has existed between the managers and the authors since its establishment is frequently cited as an argument for the closed-shop principle.

THE Authors' Guild protects the interests of novelists, poets, short story writers, and others whose works appear primarily in print. It, too, functions quietly but effectively in its own field.

The League, on the other hand, is a clearing-house for matters that are of common concern to all its Guilds. The League's council is composed of representatives of the Guilds. The council

By Marc Connelly

. . . *The President of The Author's League of America explains the set-up of the Guilds under the League.*

and its committees concern themselves with copyright, censorship, and other general problems that affect all writers both here and in other countries throughout the world.

Thus, automatically, through the growth of its Guilds, the League is slowly but surely becoming the American writers' most powerful economic instrument. It expresses his opinion, and battles for his protection through legislation and honest business practice.

## Are Extras People?

THE following item is reprinted here by permission of the Hollywood Reporter in which it appeared in the Helen Gwynn column, "Not That It Matters", in the November 29, 1935 issue:

"The statistics which have been collected on the making of 'A Tale of Two Cities' include the interesting item that the marvelous storming of the Bastille sequences were all made in ONE day.

"If you ask Jack Conway about that remarkable feat, he will generously tell you that most of the credit belongs to the many unsung extras used in those scenes. The day they were shot, work started at 8 a. m. and Conway led off with an appeal to the extras for their complete cooperation. By 10 in the morning the first scene had been ordered printed and, when Conway gave the order to print, at least a hundred extras shouted, 'What's next? Let's go!' and with that amazing spirit of willingness, and ability to execute orders, Conway was able to complete in a day what usually takes and tries the patience of a director for many weary working days."

*Was it as a reward for the above that the studio paid the lowest wage permissible under the law?*

Mayer set for the production of "Riff Raff", which was described in these columns last month, the studio evidently recognized its delinquency. After complaints had been made to the Industrial Welfare Commission, and a hearing held, an adjustment was effected and additional payment made to the extras for the treatment and injuries received. It would appear, however, that the studio had been woefully inefficient in handling the set in question for the same scenes were shot the next night, and not one woman found it disagreeable. In the meantime, provision had been made for their comforts.

The studios have had sufficient experience, in our humble opinion, to provide proper treatment and protection of people. Second guessing should not be necessary or permissible when human life is at stake.

WE'VE been puzzled of late by the many reports that studios have been issuing to extras costumes that have not been cleaned since they were worn by some other person. Such a practice is in violation of the State Sanitary Code and certainly in violation of any sense of decent concern for the welfare of the extra.

Some time ago, the Department of

Health was asked why this practice was permitted. They had an answer—may be a legitimate one. With the studios located all over the county, the job became one for the county and the state. Even then, a special police force would be required to administer it, and the cost of constantly checking violations would be prohibitive.

THE studios contend, too, that the cost of cleaning each garment is excessive. That may be so, but shouldn't that cost be added to the budget for the picture on which the costumes are used? It is our feeling that other industries which require certain expenses for sanitation, add those expenses to the cost of production.

Where large groups of extras are used and required to return to the studio day after day, the common practice is to pile the garments at the end of the working day and issue them promiscuously the next day. It should be unnecessary to point out that this is unsanitary. Yet, this condition persists, even though with a small amount of consideration, the problem could be solved by labelling the garment with the name of the extra, and requiring that he wear that piece of clothing during the entire production.

IN the case of the abuse of a number of women extras on a Metro-Goldwyn-

# What Guild Shop Has Meant to the Dramatist

I WISH that by some means I could take every youngster who is writing his first play through all my experiences in thirty years in the theatre, and let him see at first hand what happened to the author and his play in the old days. Our younger writers come now into a theatrical world where the Dramatists' Guild and its Basic Agreement are as much old fixtures as LeBlang's Agency and many of them have no conception of what the Guild shop actually means.

I remember when it was not by any means usual to get an advance against royalties on the signing of the contract. In those days a manager owned world rights, and not from the time he produced the play, but from the signing of the contract. He owned one half of the stock and motion pictures rights in perpetuity. I am today paying half the receipts from these rights in some old melodramas and other plays that were first produced fifteen or twenty years ago, which the manager has had nothing to do with since their first production.

A manager produced a play of mine without my knowledge or consent, using a company that was playing another play. He just shoved it in at a matinee performance one day and never played it again, but I still have to pay the producer half the money I receive from this show. A manager, having no obligation except to pay 50% of the receipts, could and did put a play on with a touring company for a week off and on as he chose, or even for a single night. He used to sell the road rights to anyone he wanted and merely notified you that you would have to get your money from the other man. As often as not it turned out to be some shyster from whom you couldn't collect.

UNDER the custom in the trade in the old days the manager made the motion picture sale and simply sent the author a check for his share. As a matter of fact, the manager probably had a check from the motion picture people six months before and produced the show with it. Then he thought he ought to tell the author and get things regularized. Never in my experience was a proposition made to the author. The assumption was that the play was the manager's and nobody ever gave the author a thought.

We never had a chance to examine any of the facts of the deal, or see any papers until the very last minute when the producer's attorneys remembered the copyright, and since the author held the copyright they suddenly thought perhaps they had better get his signature. We had no say about the deal and simply accepted half of what the manager said he got. I have known several cases in which the author was told the picture rights had sold for less than was actually the case.

Though theoretically an author could object to changes in the script, this was true only in proportion to the fighting strength of the author. The manager was not bound in law at all. The dramatist had to be a man of sufficient importance in the theatre and able to stand up to the manager and director to enforce it in practice. In the case of a young playwright, the manager made any changes he wanted. In fixing up a play to suit a manager—and they never used to buy a play until it was fixed up the way they wanted it, a manager would always claim his suggestions were of great value to the script and if you wanted to sell elsewhere you'd have to use the original version, though maybe you had done nine-tenths of the revision.

Any dramatist who questioned these customs would have found himself very unpopular and blacklisted so that he couldn't submit plays elsewhere. In those days a man who asked for his rights had to ask for them alone and was one individual against managers as a unit. They would consider him a trouble-maker and pass the word around. There was no appeal from any kind of injustice except to the courts, and then only when the manager had

By Owen Davis

. . . Here is history by this famous dramatist—a history that can, and may, be repeated in other writing crafts.

actually broken the law. You could go into court and sue for money owed, but other rights were disregarded with impunity.

TODAY authors have produced a collective power through organization in the Guild which enforces their rights. The managers have bound themselves in advance to certain terms and trade customs. An advance is customarily paid on the signing of the contract, and the manager merely leases the play subject to certain conditions. The play must run for three consecutive weeks on Broadway or 75 times elsewhere, in a first class theatre before the manager secures an interest in motion picture, stock and other subsidiary rights, and then his interest can be no more than 50%. The stock rights revert to the author at the end of three years unless the manager produces it in stock 75 times each year. The manager's right to share in the proceeds of amateur productions lapses when stock rights revert to the author and the radio rights one year thereafter.

Some old timers feel that in respect to money terms at least, the Basic Agreement has resulted in a decrease of the average receipts of the most successful playwrights, but admit that the younger and middle groups have secured better terms. I myself have had as much as \$5,000 advance and I know several writers who usually kept 75% of the picture rights.

However, I feel that for the good of the theatre such a loss, if there is any, is well worth while. The future of the theatre depends upon the encouragement given young talent and the Basic Agreement, backed with the force of the Guild, has certainly made their road easier, as well as that of experienced writers.

One of the most striking improvements in the dramatist's position is in regard to motion picture sales. The establishment of the Arbiter's office and the requirement of open competi-

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# The Invasion of Broadway by Picture Money

**A**CROSS the theatrical skies these days there hangs a super-rainbow. At the end is a pot of gold—a big pot, Motion Picture money. There seems to be no bottom to it, either. Everybody associated with the turning out of Films has access to this amazing receptacle. They thrust their hands into it and withdraw them dripping with gold pieces.

Where does the treasure come from? That's an easy one: It pours in from those fields which were once the property of the Spoken Drama; fields it originally pioneered and developed into prosperous territory; those cities and towns outside of New York, in every state of the Union, where travelling troupes of players, and resident stock companies satisfied the public's natural hunger for dramatic fare. In a word, "the road".

Now, the photographic-sound-reproduction plays, acted by Hollywood stars, and delivered so handily in a can, have taken away this great audience from the Theatre.

As a consequence, the Theatre has found it difficult, even impossible, to realize its legitimate "road" profits on a New York success and this fact coupled with the Depression, has reduced to a mere trickle the springs whence capital flowed into the production of plays.

**T**HEATRICAL managers have naturally under these circumstances been making doves eyes at the Pictures' pots o f g o l d . Bearing scripts with "picture possibilities" under their arms, these same managers have been making advances to Studio heads for the past few years. These personages were interested. Their industry swallows a prodigious quantity of dramatic material and there was a chance to acquire more of what they so desperately needed. But, they asked if they went so far as to stage a production, how could they be sure they would come into ultimate ownership of the motion picture rights of said play?

They were aware that the Minimum Basic Agreement of the Dramatists' Guild of the Authors' League of America (to which practically every dramatic author in the United States belongs) only permits the manager to acquire up to fifty percent of the picture rights of any play, and then only when he has produced the play for three consecutive

weeks in New York, or seventy-five times on the road.

But this arrangement did not appeal to the autoocrats of the Pictures. They wanted to own *all* the film rights, from the moment they put up their money, or be guaranteed that they could acquire them. They had no sympathy for, or understanding of the Basic Agreement which stipulates that there shall be an open market for the screen rights to a produced play.

It was pointed out to the Studio Executives that as partners of the manager (or if they themselves signed the Basic Agreement and became managers) they could thus have the privilege of earning fifty percent in these rights. It was obvious that this would give them a signal advantage over any competitive bidder.

However, this did not satisfy the acquisitive Motion Picture Minds. So they tried by various means to get around the Basic Agreement—even to break it. But to the everlasting credit of the loyal and sensible dramatists, who have refused to be coerced, bribed or bullied into double-crossing their Guild, the Picture Producers failed of their purpose. There may have been some few plays "bootlegged" to the Studios, but, if so, they were the transactions of dramatists whose plays reflected but little credit on their art.

**N**OW a change has come into the attitude of the Pictures and the time seems ripe for the Dramatists and Motion Picture Producers to get together under the laws of the Basic Agreement for their mutual benefit.

There is every indication that the Pictures are seeing the light at last. With the tremendous competition to secure rights to plays, the Studios are becoming more reasonable in their demands. Moreover, in order to strengthen their position in the play-purchasing market, they are, in many instances accepting the very propositions which formerly they rejected.

There has been no change in the stand of the Dramatists under the Basic Agreement, nor will there be, but the studios are making the best of it. Managers are now frequently obtaining Film Money for play production. The terms of these deals are of no deep concern to the playwright from a financial point of view, because the Manager—no matter where the money comes from

**B**y Edward Childs Carpenter

. . . Former president of The Dramatists' Guild writes on a very timely topic.

—can exact nothing, impose nothing, upon the Dramatist who stands with his back squarely against the Basic Agreement.

Even in the instance of current plays, where the Studios are financing the entire output of a manager's office, the same protection holds, as all must operate under the Basic Agreement.

In this connection, as evidence of how this is thoroughly understood and followed, it can be pointed out that one well-known theatrical manager, when recently offered a blanket-backing by a Motion Picture Corporation, frankly consulted with the Dramatists' Guild to be sure he was right on all points before signing up with the Studio in question.

This would seem to argue that the greatly increased flow of picture capital into the Theatre under the restrictions of the Basic Agreement will solve the Theatre's problem. But unfortunately that is not the case. There are blessings, to be sure, but they are not unmixed.

**C**ERTAIN phases are beneficial. For instance: Picture money will mean an increase in the number of plays produced. It will bring to the stage many plays requiring lavishness of production beyond the playwright's dreams of avarice. What author, relieved of the necessity of economizing on sets and people will not welcome the chance to write that play which he always thrusts into the background of his mind because it called for many changes of scene and a big cast?

On the other hand, speaking of actors: there is a popular fallacy going about that the Studios are willing and ready to release their stars and featured players for the stage; but except in a few instances, this is not working out so well for the Theatre. The quantity production of the films requires the service of all the talent available. The only time the Stage will get its players back from Hollywood is the moment when they are beginning to lose their footing, or when they have a very strong urge

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# Writing for Pictures Is a Rational Thing

THE choice between writing for the stage and writing for pictures is a choice of evils, from most viewpoints of decency, serenity, and even ordinary comfort. Either may prove a prosperous evil, and often does (and doesn't), but leaving aside the rewards, consider the actual facts, my friends (I mean the people who speak so highly of me behind my back and so contemptuously of me to my face) and then try to decide whether it is 'better' to write for the stage or the pictures and which your choice would be in a perfect world.

Of course, there is no question but that the satisfaction of writing a play is deeper, profounder and more enduring than any writing for the screen can be. This lies in the very nature of the two arts or crafts, as they are arranged today. A play is the product of your brain. (This explains the number of bad plays: a brain is often not what it should be). A picture is the product of a number of brains. (This explains the number of bad pictures: brains are often not what they should be).

No matter how directly a script is shot, the collaborative forces behind a picture are always larger than the collaborative forces behind a play. Creation is diffused. I think it would be nonsense to deny that this diminishes the joy of work and of the result of the work for the writer. It should be obvious by this time that I am talking of writers who, whether they are trying to achieve tragedy or comedy, are seriously trying to do something worth while. Skip to the comedy strips if you don't like it. I may at any moment myself.

A PLAY, again, may actually be significant. A picture can never hope to be anything more than effective. Or, at least, the chances of a play being significant are certainly much greater than a picture's, since a play is often created to find its audience and pictures are almost invariably created with the audience in mind—and still more often, with a personality in mind. Plays are cast: pictures are more often than not tailored for a cast. Looked at through a writer's horn-rimmed eyes, the whole thing is topsy-turvy. Actors (the male embraces the female) don't act for him: he writes for actors.

Some far-off day a producer is going to find a script written not for a release date or contractual requirement, but because some writer wanted to write it; that same producer is going

to hold the script for anywhere from three months to a few years to cast it, and the motion picture business is going to be revolutionized for the writer. But prophecy isn't my business here. And probably not there either.

Again, the control of material by an author doesn't exist in pictures. Every writer has had the experience of seeing his name on the screen and recognizing that he was not responsible for moods and lines in the picture. A playwright has absolute control over his material and can refuse to change a line for any producer or star. A writer in pictures can't. The result is that he cannot take the same pride in his work. A man prefers even his failures to be his own, after all.

NEVERTHELESS, there are compensations, and strangely enough, they are in the very department which is most often jeered at by writers: in the department of the personnel of the studios. Because salaries are large and comparatively sure, there is a generosity in the treatment of writers which doesn't exist in the theatre. I am not thinking here in terms of money, but in terms of treatment. When a picture is written, let us assume well written, the author is complimented on it and is (again assuming it is well written) through with it. When a play is finished, the real trouble starts for a playwright.

The wearisome business of shopping around for a producer begins then. A man with a reputation as a successful dramatist doesn't have much difficulty as a rule in 'selling' a play. Actually, this means no more than that a producer pays anywhere from \$500 upwards for a six-months option on the play.



By Edwin Justus Mayer

. . . The practical side which includes the compensation and personnel are the main features in this famous playwright and scenarist's preference of writing for the screen.

Meanwhile the producer gives the play to his masseur to read and the masseur tells the producer between his thigh and left ankle that he doesn't think much of it. The producer, already disheartened by his failure to borrow Garbo for the cast, is more disheartened. The author at the end of the six months option period finds the play back on his hands again.

He 'sells' the play again and the process is repeated. I myself sold my "Children of Darkness" three years in succession—to the Theatre Guild, Joe Harris and ultimately to Macgowan and Reed, before the play was produced on Broadway. If I state that it received an enviable press it is merely to illustrate that the qualities of a play which does earn a successful press are not always sufficiently discernible in manuscript, apparently, to insure a production within a reasonable time after it was completed. Far from it. With the exception of playwrights so solidly established that anything they write is bound to be presented immediately—and such playwrights are few—I doubt if there is a single dramatist of good reputation who cannot duplicate my own experience as detailed above.

I am not complaining. These experiences are unpleasant, often undignified, and occasionally heart-breaking; but they do not turn either me or others away from writing for the theatre, for that form of writing is a passion of a curious sort which has nothing to do with a rational life.

Pictures have; writing for pictures is a rational thing. For that reason, all Goldwyn jokes aside, it is a pleasant enough occupation. And a man brings to it just as much as the personality of his producer, star, cameraman, cutter, and various other collaborators will let him. This is often trying; but it is still not as trying as the experiences a man has writing for the theatre—unless he is ungodly lucky, and consistently ungodly lucky. After devoting years of pious meditation to my navel I raise my eyes and say to all of you: write your plays: write your pictures, and Pray to God Almighty!

# Your Mistress Is Your Best Friend After All

To Whom It May Concern:  
Dear Whom:

WITH reference to Writing For The Stage versus Writing For The Screen, I don't think there is any question that writing for the screen has all the advantage.

When you write for the stage, you have to think up your own story. That's work. When you're writing for the screen, they hand you a story that somebody else thought up.

When you're writing for the stage and you're stuck, you're stuck. When you're writing for the screen and you're stuck, your producer lends you his brains, and, if that isn't enough, your director and three or four other writers appear as if by magic with their brains.

When you're writing for the stage, you don't get a cent while you're writing. In other words, you're living on principal. When you're writing for the screen, you get that check every week.

When you're writing for the stage, you have to pay your own secretary. When you're writing for the screen there are blondes, brunettes, red-heads—there's even a mimeographing department—and you and she never talk about money.

When you're writing for the stage, if the gods have been kind and you finish your play, the chances are 5,000 to 1 against its being produced. When you're writing for the screen, before you've written a line the chances are 100,000 to 1 that it will be produced.

AND if your play should be produced, the chances are 250 to 1 that your \$500 advance and insults in the columns of newspapers with a total circulation of 10,000,000 are all you'll get out of it. As for the picture you have written, you've been paid handsomely and no matter what's said about it, your reputation won't suffer.

And if your play is a success, the only credit you'll get for it will be on the theatre programs and in the Sunday newspaper ads in eight point type. But in pictures, for less than 10% of your weekly salary you can buy full-page ads in the Hollywood Reporter, Variety, The Film Daily Annual, etc., and the WORLD will know.

And who sees that hit play of yours? Just a lot of New York non-movie people. But the film you wrote! Everybody sees that, except maybe your wife.

Besides, the stage is an outworn institution.

Its day is over.

All the good actors are in Hollywood.

All the good directors are in Hollywood.

You get sinus trouble in New York.

. . . So who wouldn't abandon the stage at the drop of a hat for the screen?

I wouldn't.

AND I suppose the reason I wouldn't is because I'm of the old generation of writers—that soon-to-be-forgotten school which believed that you see it, you feel it, you work out a way of saying it and then you say it. Yourself. And then you take the rap. Yourself. For better or for worse.

In my day, back in 1925, we didn't even dream that the public would find still a newer and better way of being served. We didn't realize that cooperation and group action, that all the blessings of the machine age and the factory system, would descend upon our craft and that we were by way of becoming a Major Industry.

Today there must be a new school springing up. I am sure our colleges are full of eager youngsters who are looking forward some day to becoming screen writers, and who, when they become screen writers, will consider their careers fulfilled. They must dream about it as a student engineer dreams about some day being called into consultation on the building of a great bridge.

Or, if they are shrewder, these literary youngsters will dream of the day when they are picture directors. For

By Samson Raphaelson

. . . A writer who has met with great success both as scenarist and playwright, explains why he prefers to write for the stage.

then, even though they are participating in a group product, they will, if they are any good, shape that product to their taste and make it, in a general way, an expression of their individual selves.

And they will find great satisfaction. For there is no doubting any more that the screen is a valid and fluent medium capable of as rich and delicate a range of expression as any known to man, and challenging an artist's greatest powers.

THE fact that it costs a vast sum of money to make a picture and that an enormously wide audience must like the picture if it is to be financially profitable is an unfortunate fact only from the point of view of the writer who wants to write honestly from his experience rather than amiably from his skill.

Now this amiable business is fine, and I have nothing against it. It is respectable, and when it's done well, it is admirable. The trouble comes when, one fine day, you suddenly feel you have something to say. Well, if it is something, and you are you, and it's really going to be said—you're in a spot. Because automatically you have Limited your Audience.

Well, I am all for a limited audience, if you can afford it.

## Statistics of the 1934-35 Theatre Season in New York

Reprinted by permission from The Billboard Index of the New York Stage

Total Number of Productions.....	189
Total Dramatic Productions .....	158
Total Musical Productions .....	31
Total Commercial Premieres .....	131
Commercial Premieres (Dramatic) .....	114
Commercial Premieres (Musical) .....	17
Percentage of Failures (Less than 100 Performances) .....	81%
Percentage of Failures (Dramatic) .....	83%
Percentage of Failures (Musical) .....	69%
Average Length of Runs (Dramatic) .....	55
Average Length of Runs (Musical) .....	102
Total Number of Hits (Over 100 Performances) .....	26
Dramatic Hits .....	21
Musical Hits .....	5
Total Number of People Involved .....	3,324*
Players Involved .....	2,703*
Producing Offices Active .....	123

\*Chorus people in musicals are not figured in these totals.

# The Theatre is the Only True Actor's Medium

WHEN one is asked, as one so frequently is, which is the better medium for acting—the stage or the screen, one's first emotion is that of amazement—or was, before the emotion faded from repetition. Amazement that the screen could be seriously regarded as an actor's medium. For surely the first requirement of any craftsman in relation to his medium is that he have control of it. And surely no one can seriously contend that the actor has any control over the medium of the motion picture.

Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean physical control. Granting him all manner of authority over the writing, the direction, the photography, and the cutting (an inconceivable state of affairs under the present system), he still, as an actor, is practically in chains during the only period which counts for him—the period of actual performance. Nor can he ever be otherwise. He is fundamentally at the mercy of a dozen mechanical hindrances, of a constantly interrupted continuity, and, most important, he is deprived of that other vital element of drama, the audience.

On the stage, however, the actor is manifestly supreme. At the really crucial moment, the moment of raising the curtain, all the other contributors to the show have departed; the playwright, the director, the scene designer, costumer, lighting expert—everybody but the actor. He is left in solitary glory, in supreme command, with nothing between him and his living audience, to command and control as he thinks fit. Then commences that ex-

By Leslie Howard

*...Playwright as well as actor who feels the screen is supreme only as a director's medium.*

traordinary partnership between actor and spectator which is the very essence of theatre. Here, to my mind, exists the only possible control over the art of acting.

But if the theatre is the only true actor's medium, the screen is incomparably the superior for the director. For the ideal motion picture director should be also a writer, or a collaborator to a writer. He must be a natural storyteller, for it is he who tells the story. And what a great medium for storytelling the screen is. And to have at one's disposal the innumerable devices for this purpose which the modern motion picture offers is indeed a millenium for the spinner of yarns the good director is.

Does this answer the question? Probably not. Except—very definitely—for me.



## I Prefer the Screen to the Stage

ONE great reason why I prefer picture work better than the stage is that after nearly thirty years of trouping, I can live in my own home.

The house we have now in Beverly Hills is the first real home I've ever had. For thirty years I moved from hotel to hotel, from town to town—the uncertain, hazardous life of a trouper.

Cooking is one of my hobbies, and I can remember trying to prepare dinners over a single gas flame in those days—inviting other members of the company to eat with us, to give them a touch of home.

Bringing up my children properly, worried me too, because I realize how important security is to growing children how they need to feel that some definite place in the world is theirs.

I've always been a family man at heart. With my wife and youngsters—that's where my chief interests are. We're a close little family circle, sufficient unto ourselves. And Hollywood has given us our first chance to be together, as a real family should be.

My daughter acts as my secretary and

answers my fan mail. My son is now beginning on a career of his own in pictures, and I believe he will have success. I enjoy the Sundays we spend together—days when I indulge in my hobby and prepare the meal, whether it's the cook's day out or not.

I can spend nights at home now, too. Hollywood has given me that. I usually quit work around six, and I have my evenings to myself. And when I go for a trip with Mrs. Arnold, it's a real vacation—not just another tour.

SO far as the mechanics of acting are concerned, I like the screen better too. I've never changed my methods of acting for pictures. Some of the things other stage actors complain about in picture work have never bothered me. The business of breaking up a dramatic part into several scenes, for instance. I like it. You have a chance to do a scene over if you're not so good the first time. On the stage, if you pull a bloomer, it remains just that, beyond hope of recall!

By Edward Arnold

*...This comparatively recent recruit from the stage prefers motion pictures primarily because of the security offered.*

Also, I like knowing that my work reaches millions of people. On the stage you can only hope to be known by those who live in or near large cities. I'm proud and pleased to know that I have fans all over the world. I get a kick out of watching my kids bask in my reflected glory—strangers speaking to me when we're out in public, people asking for my autograph.

On my recent trip to Honolulu, I was really astonished at the number of invitations Mrs. Arnold and I received—at the hundreds of people who wanted to show us a good time. It brought home to me literally how many fans a Hollywood star has, and how much pleasure he brings to millions of people.

When I returned home, my children  
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# Portrait of a Playwright

HE'S bald. He's rounding forty, but his press releases always read "young playwright." He's been divorced twice and would like to marry again, but the alimony is terrific. He has a penthouse on the East River, a farm in Connecticut and a rancho in San Fernando valley; yet he's always so broke he keeps most of these places closed in order to pay his income tax.

When in New York, he gets a two-room suite in the Waldorf towers; in California he puts up at the Beverly-Wilshire because it's close to Metro and right across the street from the Derby. He usually comes out on a ten-week ticket because that's the maximum time he can spare Hollywood at a stretch.

The last time he was here, he stayed three months because he had to fly to Reno every weekend to keep residence established. After that, he went on a world cruise to rest up and knock out two plays on which he had made notes a decade before. The first one, about ten men in a lumber camp, lasted six performances; the second one tried out in Philly and Paramount said to yank it in Pittsburgh. When he sees it as a picture, will he be surprised!

He's tall, weighs about one hundred and sixty pounds and sleeps in his night shirt. He shaves with an electric razor but when traveling across country, always lets the train barber do the tonsorial honors. Wetzel makes his clothes, but when he has a show in London, he loads up a dozen garments from Bond street. He prefers his English tailors because they make him look sloppier, and that's part of his pose.

NOT that he's a poseur. Not for a minute. He's a hard-working industrious able fellow. He likes to direct his own plays because that keeps them in the spirit he meant them. He tries to keep on the sets as much as possible when he is out on the film coast, but "these lousy silent directors have no feeling for words."

For a lad who grew up in the gutters of Manhattan's ghetto, he, paradoxically enough, writes sophisticated, brittle, fluffy things. He has a wonderful ear and an astounding memory; more than that, his notebook is jammed with vignettes which someday will blossom forth into springboards for the Thespian art. From the time he acted in Settlement House dramatics, through the days when he was a Counselor at Summer

Camps, through his errand-boy and press-agenting years on Broadway, the Theatre has been his whole life.

It's absorbed him, encompassed him, saturated him. He looks at all social events through a showman's microscope. A race riot to him is nine scenes in three acts; the occasion of a foreign potentate's twenty-five years of rule is an intimate revue with music; Reno is a laugh-filled farce with an undercurrent of heart-breaking comedy; a lynching is a splurge in propaganda-writing; and a German purge on his colleague's kin is the starting pistol for a run of dialogue that will have the first night audience cheering, but the box office as empty as the Sahara at noon day.

And why not, he argues. Business men worry about a cataclysmic upheaval and run to the ticker tape; advertising men battle the Tugwell Bill; scientists dash to the seismograph when the earth starts to rumble and roar; why shouldn't he turn to his craft when two innocent foreigners walk to their deaths in Massachusetts, when ten negroes are framed in the free South, when politics in the White House makes a mockery of our government.

WHEN his brittle divorce comedies were the vogue in 1927 and 1928, he was the cock of the walk. Paris and the Riviera saw him and his first wife daily. He had, several seasons before, fortified his playwright's knowledge with a season at Baker. There he learned what Broadway hadn't taught him; that a drama requires movement and resistance since unresisting movement is uninteresting, that conflict implies two sides; and that a playwright's relation to conflict assumes two sides; and that playwright's relation to conflict assumes two forms: (1) his effect upon conflict takes shape in deeds and (2) the effect of conflict on him takes shape in emotion.

It was quite a while before he could reconcile his Broadway training to theory; but he soon dovetailed them and wrote a smash. Just recently, though, he got out his lecture notes when he was invited by Elmer Rice to speak before a W. P. A. group and he was amazed! He wondered why Professors of the Drama had to teach such obvious things. Everyone connected with the theatre knew, certainly, that a play had to be "an interesting story with interest ascending," that it must be "developed

By Allen Rivkin

. . . Observations and knowledge of the knack of using them has made possible this composite photograph.

in scenes that are interesting apart from their bearing out the outcome," that the "treatment must be clear and the movement rapid," and that "the dialogue must be capable of effectual utterance on the platform before an audience."

He lapped up the first fresh overflow of success. It was wonderful, he said. The December, 1927, issue of *Vanity Fair* reached him in Cannes on Christmas Day and there was his picture in the "Hall of Fame!" George Jean Nathan did a piece on him for *The American Mercury*; and he just came that far from grabbing off the Pulitzer Prize. He repeated his underwritten-dialogue-and-suppressed-emotions feat in the season of 1928 and again the Theatre bowed before his genius. But he struck out the third time. He wrote his "story" once too often.

THEN he was frightened. He didn't want to lose what he had learned to love: success! He fretted and worried. He became melancholic and woeful. He thought he had to do something violent —so he divorced his wife!

When a gossip columnist reported that Our Playwright was trying to live up to his own plays, he was furious!

Then he worked like a madman. All day and night he scratched on a pad while the sharp sun rose and the red sun set in the hills of Connecticut. He studied, he did research, he steeped himself in the off-record naughtiness of a British queen and her laddie-love. With shaking hands, he submitted it to the Guild. They cast it divinely, staged it with reverence and the notices tore the town wide open. Once more, he thanked God, he was a playwright.

He only tried History once again. He'd learned his lesson. You could do it twice; but the third time, that's where you cheapened yourself, he said.

Once again he attended the round table on Forty-fourth street; once again he opened his pent house and held poker sessions into the next afternoon; and his Hollywood salary jumped fifteen hundred dollars!

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# The Future of the American Theatre

**C**RYSTAL gazing is one of the most popular indoor sports running a close second to bridge and the cocktail hour. It is one of the two ways of examining the future of the American theatre. We look into the crystal and wish, and wishing is a mighty pleasant occupation. The crystal will reflect exactly what we want to see. The theatre we see will have all the eccentricities we have, and all the tricks we like so well. It will have the actors and actresses we admire. The seats will be comfortable, and all drafts eliminated. Everybody will make more than enough money; every play will be a hit; every play will win the Pulitzer Prize, and the world will turn out to be the best of all possible worlds. The crystal will reflect a theatre nearer to our heart's desire, but it is very unlikely that it will be the future theatre.

There is another way to prophesy. Throw the crystals out of the window but keep the window open in order to see what kind of a world we're living in. This method is much harder. The crystal method, on the other hand, has many advantages but so has a kindergarten. Let's try to be scientists for a change.

The scientific method demands that we place the theatre in time; that we look into its past (the events leading up to the tragedy, if that's the way you feel about it); that we see what its present is like. Then, and only then, can we predict with any sort of intelligence.

**S**OME people when looking into the past of the American theatre would devote themselves to proving that our theatre has grown out of George Bernard Shaw by Ibsen, or that it was an illegitimate offspring of Galsworthy out of George M. Cohan, or that everything stemmed from O'Neill with a dash of Aeschylus. They would limit themselves to the theatre as an art, forgetting the while the theatre as real estate, as a business with profits and loss and incorporation papers, preferably Delaware. Unfortunately the two pasts are inseparable, as the two presents are and as the futures, at least the two immediate futures, must inevitably be.

The fate of the average actor, the average playwright, scene designer and stage-hand is as inexorably bound up with the fate of real estate as the fate of real estate, itself, is inexorably bound

up with such things as oil wells in Irak, the procedure of industrial production and the rate of consumption, burning wheat, the N.R.A., Wall Street, etc. etc. Not only are their fates intertwined, but also the health of one means the health of the other. Unfortunately we of the theatre cannot alone invigorate the congested economic system. It needs more than a tonic. It needs a major operation. But we can and must realize that the theatre, in good years and in bad years, in health and in sickness, is part and parcel of it.

Now that we have a point of reference, let us look into the past of the theatre. In an informative book called *B'way Inc.* Morton Eustis presents us with enough facts for our little investigation.

1927-1928 was a boom year in the theatre. During the year approximately 70% of Equity's membership worked. How long did they work? Using round numbers, of the 6000 actors who had employment, 4800 averaged less than nine weeks, and 2400 averaged only three and a half weeks. And how much were they paid? "Estimating the average salary of the actor in both musical and dramatic productions at that time as \$100 a week (which is a high figure) this means that the 4800 actors received an average income of \$880 or less that year, and of these, 2400 received \$350 for the year."

These figures tell their own sad tale. Even in the best years the actor had to live on slightly under \$14 a week on an average. The additional fact that with the depression five years later, there were 2000 less actors working, makes it unnecessary for me to push the point too far.

Is there anything particularly glamorous about the actor's past, the rank



By Michael Blankfort

... The founder of *The Theatre Union*, director of "Stevedore" and adapter of "Sailors of Cattaro" presents this interesting prophecy.

and file actor, in the American theatre?

It is difficult to show figures about the playwright. God knows how many unproduced plays there are. Anybody who takes a look at the files of the Federal Theatre Project will soon find out how many playwrights, produced and unproduced, there are. There are two facts, however, that stick out. Number one is that from 65 to 85% of all plays produced in New York are financial failures (we won't mention how much larger the percentage of artistic failures is). And number two, there are literally hundreds of plays unproduced that by any standards you choose, are better than most that are produced. I refer you to such people as Barrett H. Clark, Anita Block and John Gassner of the Theatre Guild, Margaret Larkin of the Theatre Union, Cheryl Crawford of the Group Theatre for verification. They read thousands of plays and they know. Why does Virgil Geddes remain unproduced? and E. P. Conkle and a dozen others I could name?

**T**HE high percentage of failures has its own logic. Despite other considerations of his business, the producer is persuaded not to take too many chances or too big a chance. If the theatre is a gamble, the dice ought least not be loaded. And the theatre is a gamble because it is business. Business cannot afford to experiment with either new form or new ideas . . . in the theatre. Like a cat chasing its own tail, this merry-go-round of a theatre turns every thing it touches into a gamble with the odds in varying degrees against the actor, playwright, stage hand, designer, director, etc. These theatre workers cannot afford to gamble. Banks who own the real estate can. That's their livelihood; that's how they make their money. Producers can afford to or they wouldn't be in the business.

In short, the past of the American theatre has not been a noble past, that is if insecurity of its workers has anything to do with nobility. The present day finds it even less noble with its

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# Broadway's Summer Theatres

A CERTAIN test of a play's success is its ability to survive the torrid, wilting months of the New York summer. A theatre-goer really has to spend an uncomfortable evening in a Broadway house to understand why the only moderately successful plays begin to disappear from the boards around June first.

As a matter of fact the first of June is recognized officially as the end of the theatre season.

It is on this date that all Actor's Equity contracts are automatically terminated. However, long before this, the busy entrepreneurs of the "pasture" theatres are casting their eyes around for the best of the available plays. By the first week in June they already have a list of the current dramatic hits booked. If they are fortunate, they have also arranged for the appearances of one or two of Broadway's high-priced stars, to appear as guest artists in their original roles created on Broadway.

This past summer it would have been impossible to have attended, if only for one performance, all the summer theatres sprawled throughout the eastern sea-board. Broadway itself boasts of only fifty-nine playhouses that are suitable for production purposes. The summer of this year saw over one hundred summer theatres flourishing in as many mountain and sea resorts. With their eyes to business the summer managers usually establish themselves in a summer retreat, where their companies can be assured of patronage from the vacationers.

Of course, it is impossible to expect standard Broadway professional performances and expert productions to prevail in all hundred of the companies. Some of these, like Lawrence Langner's company at Westport, the stock company at Mt. Kisco and the Raymond Moore group at Dennis offer productions often technically comparable to Broadway presentations. On the other hand, over eighty percent of the barn theatres' attractions are only slightly more competent than the average Little Theatre production. Small, inadequate stages improperly equipped, woefully inexperienced actors under the direction of self-styled Belascos, determined on a theatrical career at any cost, cause the summer fare to be cluttered up with undistinguished productions. Fortunately, these companies whose shortcomings are too painfully apparent, even to the more than tolerant spectator, fail

to survive two or three weeks at the utmost.

ALTHOUGH tried and established current New York attractions comprise the majority of the summer programs, most of the producers alternate their weekly offerings with new and unproduced plays. The new plays fall into two classifications. The first, and the less important from the theatrical viewpoint, is the unproduced play, which has as yet not been sold to a Broadway manager. It is the summer theatre manager's hope to present the play in a sufficiently attractive form to induce some manager to see its possibilities for a Broadway run. If he is successful in selling the play by this means, he shares in the resultant royalties to be garnered from the New York run.

The summer theatre really presents its greatest usefulness as an experimental laboratory for a second class of plays. These are the new plays the rights to which have already been secured by a Broadway producer, who intends to place it on his schedule the forthcoming season. This production is naturally in the nature of a try-out. Here the producer can view his property and determine what he has. It is possible for him to see which scenes are too long, and which scenes retard the action or mood of the play. Often, he discovers comedy possibilities that did not appear in the mere reading of his manuscript. These scenes he commissions the author to build up and strengthen. In this manner re-writing, which is so bothersome and time-losing during the actual Broadway rehearsal period, is avoided. And what is of genuine importance to the manager is the opportunity afforded to observe audience reaction. The audience membership of the summer theatre can be said to be similar in its tastes to the New York audience.

Thus this preliminary showing works to obviate the necessity of the hitherto customary out-of-town try-out. The summer theatre try-out with one exception, serves the same purposes as the more expensive and onerous away-from-Broadway week's run in nearby Philadelphia or Boston. The only advantage of the preliminary run a week previous to the Broadway opening lies in the extra week's time for the actors to round out their characterizations.

Frequently, a producer who be-

By John Schaffer

. . . Who, for the past six years, has been connected with Broadway managers in directorial and executive capacities.

lieves he has a smash hit, upon viewing the play during the summer, realizes his mistake and decides to abandon the project. Of course, it is not too expensive and disastrous to abandon a play with only the meagre expenses of a summer try-out attached to it. An excellent summer try-out might cost him only five hundred dollars. On the other hand, a play which had rehearsed four weeks, had scenery constructed for Broadway, and discarded after a Philadelphia try-out, might easily cost him from six to twelve hundred dollars, depending on his production.

BOTH from the financial and artistic viewpoints there are several outstanding summer stock companies. At Westport, Conn., is Lawrence Langner, whose summer season invariably includes a quota of forthcoming Broadway successes. It was at this very attractive theatre that such pieces as *The Pursuit of Happiness*, *The School for Husbands*, *The Bride the Sun Shines On* saw their pre-Broadway light. Up at fashionable Bar Harbour, Leighton Rollins is in charge. At historic Skowhegan, now in its thirty-fifth year, is Melville Burke, the well-known New York director. Raymond Moore, who has brought some of his summer plays to New York operates the very successful house at Dennis, Mass.

It has been F. Cowles Strickland's policy to employ men of the Yale School of the Theatre as his associates at the social-register Berkshire Playhouse. Broadway's popular *Fly Away Home* had its premier here. At Southampton on Long Island the dowagers of the fashionable colony were the first to view *Double Door* and other Broadway hits introduced by Potter and Haight, both of whom are now in Hollywood. Among the leading companies we find Walter Hartwig at Ogunquit, Tuttle and Skinner at Mt. Kisco (which playhouse frequently displays the S.R.O. sign) and Arthur Hanna's Locust Valley Red Barn. An unusual group are

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# Has Hollywood Robbed Broadway?

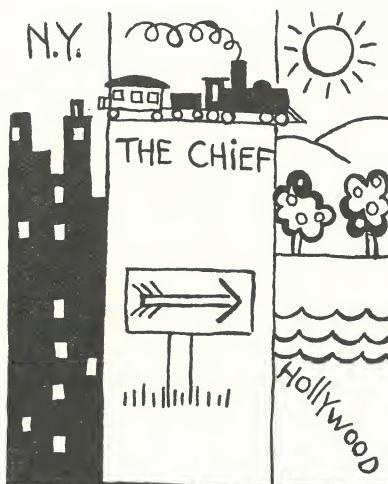
NOW, who brought that up—and why? Can it be possible that the Editor is spoofing—or has this magazine suddenly run short on fillers? If this question were asked by someone living in Ethiopia, a person might take it seriously. But such a query coming from the cinema city, well that's something else again. Can it be that the roars and growls of the New York producers have been heard in Hollywood?

I hardly think so. Mayor LaGuardia has instigated an anti-noise campaign which even the animals in Central Park Zoo must obey. Besides, the play producers never roar and grumble at the same time—they take turns. Possibly, some day they'll hit upon the idea of all roaring at once. It would make quite a racket. And speaking of rackets, that's what most of the roaring seems to be about. The Hollywood snatch racket, the boys call it.

They complain that the movie moguls are snatching actors from legitimate shows just as soon as the actor draws a good notice. Can you imagine a producer kicking about a little thing like that? It just goes to show what a grouchy and ungrateful lot they really are. They seem totally unappreciative of the honor Hollywood is conferring on them by offering picture contracts to their actors as soon as a show opens—

and the Broadway playwright is just about as bad.

THEY grumble because it has taken them three or four months to cast their play. They lose sight of the fact that they have met a great many very interesting personalities while interviewing hundreds of unknown actors and they have had the pleasure of travelling over the countryside to the out-of-the-way try-out towns selecting their casts. Hasn't all that nice fresh air been beneficial to them?



By Philip Dunning

. . . A playwright and producer who cannot get used to the idea of running a shop window for Hollywood.

So, if it was the roar of a Broadway producer or the gentler grumble of a playwright that prompted the request for an article entitled "Has Hollywood Robbed Broadway," pay no heed to their ranting, the poor chaps just can't get used to the idea of running a shop window for Hollywood.

Some happy day soon, when Equity gets together with the producers, or vice-versa, and the dramatists get together with the stage hands union, and the theatre owner gets together with the tax assessor—and the trucking companies get together with the bill-posters union, and the builders get together with the scenic artists union—and the critics get together with their advertising departments—and the ticket brokers get together with each other, and these fellows en masse get together with the public—that sure would be one hell of a get-together that might mean something to the theatre. But it's then, and only then, that a roar from anyone connected with the New York legitimate theatre will be taken seriously.

## I'm in Favor of It

*Editor's Note:* Several months ago, in an article which appeared in these columns, Harlan Thompson explained the need and made the proposal for a commercial theatre to be operated by the Screen Actors' Guild and The Screen Writers' Guild. The article was called "Little Orphan Theatre (With A Suggestion for Adoption Papers)." Murray Kinnell made a further suggestion in the next issue when he proposed "Let's Adopt The Orphan." The following article is the third in the series.

I TOO, am in favor of the Guilds adopting the "Little Orphan Theatre." Every Guild actor should be. But please don't think it's because I want to throw a generous paternal arm around an abused waif. Oh, no. Puny and ailing as she is now, Little Orphan Theatre might shoot up to be the sup-

port of a lot of us in our old age.

And that plan has more to offer than a sound investment for a long pull. Let us look at its more immediate aspects. Let us look at it, however, as being primarily selfish. It is, or will be, a project to benefit Guild members. As far as actors are concerned, it will be, on one hand, a showcase for unproved or forgotten abilities; on the other, a steam cabinet for the refreshing of overworked, deadened, even exhausted talents.

The first of these, the display of unproved abilities, is greatly important. There are featured players in the Guild who could carry starring parts, there are bit players who deserve featured roles. And even producers admit that pictures—to say nothing of actors—suffer from type casting. A Guild Theatre, a Theatre where the actor would have some voice, and that voice

By Fredric March

. . . Another prominent actor voices his approval of the proposed Theatre which would be operated by the Guilds.

some weight, would help to avoid such casting.

Forgotten abilities are rarer, if sadder, than unproved ones. But they do exist. The picture business is notoriously capricious. A Guild Theatre would afford a sympathetic arena for the staging of an occasional well merited comeback.

THAT a stage performance is a stimulating, a refreshing experience to a player who has been long in pic-

(Continued on Page 24)

# Best Performance of November

**W**INNER in the most spirited balloting of recent months, James Cagney receives The Screen Actors' Guild selection for the Best Performance of November for his portrayal of "Bottom" in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Max Reinhardt's Warner Bros. picture.

Great diversity of opinion as to the best of the month was shown by the actors, who included in their votes twenty players from thirteen different pictures. This is the greatest number to receive votes since this system of monthly selections was instituted by the Guild.

First Honorable Mention was won by Carole Lombard for her performance as "Regi Allen" in "Hands Across the Table," the Paramount picture. Many critics rate this her finest to date.

Preston Foster was chosen by the votes of his fellow players for Second Honorable Mention for his portrayal of "Marcus" in RKO-Radio's production, "The Last Days of Pompeii."

An interesting feature of this month's competition is the mention of more than one player from a number of pictures. Apparently one good performance begets another. Three actors in "I Live My Life" received votes and two actors in each of the following pictures were included in the balloting: "The Last Days of Pompeii", "Thanks a Million", "Hands Across the Table" and "Three Kids and a Queen."

In the six months since the system of monthly selections by vote of the members of The Screen Actors' Guild has been in effect, the actors are leading the actresses three to two. Out of twenty selections, there having been two ties, twelve men and eight women have won places.

Another interesting feature of the voting by the two Guilds is the fact that a number of the pictures selected by the Writers as best screen plays have been the ones in which actors have received honors from their fellows for outstanding performances.

## Best Performance

**James Cagney**

as Bottom in

"**A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM**"

Produced by Warner Bros.-First National

## HONORABLE MENTION

**Carole Lombard**

as Regi Allen in

"**HANDS ACROSS THE TABLE**"

Produced by Paramount Pictures Corp.

**Preston Foster**

as Marcus in

"**THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII**"

Produced by R.K.O.-Radio Pictures

## Best Screen Play

"**HANDS ACROSS THE TABLE**"

Screen Play by **Herbert Fields, Norman Krasna and Vincent Lawrence**

From an Original by Vina Delmar

Produced by Paramount Pictures Corp.

## HONORABLE MENTION

"**A NIGHT AT THE OPERA**"

Screen Play by **George Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind**

From an Original by James Kevin McGuiness

Produced by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"**THANKS A MILLION**"

Screen Play by **Nunnally Johnson**

Produced by 20th Century-Fox

# Best Screen Play of November

**T**HREE collaborators, Norman Krasna, Vincent Lawrence and Herbert Fields, receive The Screen Writers' Guild Award for the Best Screen Play of November for their script on "Hands Across the Table". This Paramount picture from Vina Delmar's story received a big majority of the ballots, which included votes for sixteen pictures out of a list of thirty-two releases for the month. Voting this month showed an extremely wide divergence of opinion.

Norman Krasna and Vincent Lawrence with exceptional reputations as successful playwrights have demonstrated their grasp of the motion picture medium. Among Krasna's picture credits are "The Richest Girl in the World", "Four Hours to Live", "Parole Girl" and "So this is Africa"; while Vincent Lawrence's list includes "Good Dame", "Behold My Wife", "Now and Forever" and "Cleopatra". Herbert Fields has recent credits on "People Will Talk", "Let's Fall in Love", "Down to Their Last Yacht" and "Mississippi".

First Honorable Mention goes to two more playwrights, who have

switched from stage to screen, George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind for their screen play of "A Night at the Opera", the Marx Brothers M. G. M. picture. A number of Kaufman's plays and stories have been made into pictures including, "Once in a Lifetime", "Dinner at Eight", "Roman Scandals", "Man With Two Faces" and "Elmer and Elsie". Morrie Ryskind authored several of the Marx Brothers stage successes before transferring his talents to the screen. He is credited with the original story for the picture "Palmy Days". "A Night at the Opera" is from an original by James Kevin McGuiness.

Second Honorable Mention was won by Nunnally Johnson for his screen play of "Thanks a Million", Twentieth Century-Fox picture, based on a story by Melville Crossman. Johnson, who recently has been made an associate producer for his own material, has a number of outstanding successes on his list, among them, "House of Rothschild", "Bulldog Drummond Strikes Back", "Moulin Rouge" and "Bedtime Story".

## Los Angeles Releases

October 21 to November 19

Case of the Lucky Legs, The—Warner Bros.  
Costa Diva—Alleanza Cinematografica.  
Charlie Chan in Shanghai—Fox  
Crusades, The—Paramount.  
Dr. Socrates—Warner Bros.  
Father Knows Best—Thalia Films.  
Hands Across the Table—Paramount.  
Harmony Lane—Mascot Pictures.  
I Live My Life—M.G.M.  
It Happened in Copenhagen—Palladium.  
It's In the Air—M.G.M.  
Last Days of Pompeii—R.K.O.  
Music Is Magic—20th Century-Fox.  
Mon's Children, A—SFI.  
Metropolitan—20th Century-Fox.  
Midsummer Night's Dream—Warner Bros.  
Night at the Opera, A—M.G.M.  
O'Shaughnessy's Boy—M.G.M.  
Peter Ibbetson—Paramount.  
Remember Last Night—Universal.  
She Couldnt Take It—Columbia.  
Society Fever—Invincible.  
Stars Over Broadway—Warner Bros.  
Streamline Express—Mascot Pictures.  
Thanks a Million—20th Century-Fox.  
Three Kids and a Queen—Universal.  
Three Musketeers, The—R.K.O.  
Thunder in the Night—Fox.  
Transatlantic Tunnel—Gaumont-British.  
Two Fisted—Paramount.  
Two Sinners—Republic Prod.  
Water Front Lady—Republic Prod.

# Screen Writers' Guild

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Eve Greene	Gordon Rigby
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Jesse Lasky, Jr.	Paul Gerard Smith
Mary McCarthy	Sidney Sutherland
Brian Marlow	Dwight Taylor
John Twist	

### Warning!

THE following information was relayed to members by letter since the last publication of the MAGAZINE:

November 20, 1935.

### TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCREEN WRITERS' GUILD:

Many efforts have been made to turn the producers' Academy Agreement for Writers into a lever to force members of the Guild to join the Academy. You will be told that all credit controversies must be adjusted through the Academy. Once you go in the Academy offices terrific pressure is brought to bear upon you to join the Academy. Guild members will not want either to join the Academy or have the Academy pushed down their throats.

You may obtain all of the advantages, if any, of the credit clauses in the Producers' Academy Agreement without ever entering the Academy offices. Use the following procedure:

(1) If you wish to protest the Producer's tentative determination of credits and wish to read the script, get your copy of the script at the studio, not at the Academy offices.

(2) If your protest is denied by the Producer, do not take an appeal to the Academy committee. By the express language of the so-called Basic Agreement the decision of the Writers' Adjustment Committee on such an appeal does not obligate the Producer to change the credits on the screen. An appeal, therefore, from the Producer's determination under the Producers' Academy Agreement is merely an empty gesture. Don't do it.

Any questions regarding your right to credits on any particular picture should be brought to the offices of the Guild. As in the past, the Guild will continue to aid you in the solution of your problem.

(signed) Robert N. Lee.  
Secretary.

By Order of the Executive Board.

### Wells Made Honorary Member

AT the meeting of the Board on November 25th, H.G. Wells, the eminent British author was elected to Honorary Membership in The Screen Writers' Guild. It was felt by the Board that this honor to Mr. Wells was an expression of the feeling of the entire membership of the Guild toward this outstanding figure in the world of letters.

### Deputies Liaison Officers

NOW in existence for three months, deputies at the various studios have served as valuable contacts between the Board and the membership at large. Through their operation, handling of much otherwise neglected business has been facilitated.

During the past month, George Wagner has accepted the appointment of deputy for Universal, replacing Miss Doris Malloy. Miss Malloy is now at Paramount.

Because Allen Rivkin has been transferred to the 20th Century Fox studio in Westwood, Lou Breslow has been appointed the deputy for the 20th Century-Fox Western Ave. studio.

Deputies serve as liaison officers and are easily accessible to Guild members at all times. One has been installed at each studio. He is available to Guild members for the following:

- (a) To report individual complaints;
- (b) To service controversies to be handled by the Guild's Conciliation Commission;
- (c) To report violations of the Guild Code;
- (d) To handle protests against membership transfers, etc., etc.

It is suggested that Guilders contact their deputies at least once a week to report or discuss activities that should be presented to the Board, and to inform the deputies of new assignments, etc. Deputies make reports to the Guild at least once a week or more often if circumstances demand.

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by Filing it With

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1655 North Cherokee Avenue  
FEE—50c—Guild Members  
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### Annual Dance December 19

THE Ambassador's Fiesta Room is the place. Thursday, December 19, 1935, is the date. Eight-thirty is the time for the Guild's Second Annual Dinner Dance. And it will be a big time, too, with gay music, dinner and wine, Mlle. Fortune and all the other necessities including a floor show for a pleasant evening.

(Continued on Page 17)

# Screen Actors' Guild

## OFFICERS

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Hugh Herbert	Thelma Todd
Miriam Hopkins	Lee Tracy
Otto Kruger	Evelyn Venable
Francis Lederer	Lois Wilson

## ACTORS' MAGAZINE COMMITTEE

C. Henry Gordon	Murray Kinnell
	Ivan Simpson

## 32 New Members

SINCE Sept. 19, 1935, the following 32 players have been elected as members of the Screen Actors' Guild by the Board of Directors:

Walter Abel	Nola Luxford
Margaret Callahan	Aline MacMahon
Eddy Chandler	Eily Malyon
Marguerite Churchill	Florine McKinney
Brian Donlevy	Robert Middlemass
Frances Drake	Henry Mollison
John Eldredge	Carlyle Moore
Edward Gargan	Richard G. Purcell, Jr.
Diana O. Gibson	Bill Robinson
Porter Hall	Joseph Sawyer
O. P. Heggie	Nicholas Soussanin
Valerie Hobson	Joseph Spurin-Calleia
Victor Kilian	Lionel Stander
Frank Lawton	Onslow Stevens
Fritz Leiber	Martha Tibbets
Kay Linaker	Pat West

## Equity-Guild Contract Amended

A GREAT step has been taken to strengthen and simplify the working agreement between The Screen Actors' Guild and The Actors' Equity Association. The contract drawn up and adopted last year, while excellent in its intent, failed to cover adequately several points which would make it more workable and more binding on the membership.

During Frank Gillmore's visit here in September, changes were discussed. Upon his return to New York these proposals were taken up with the Equity Council and immediately adopted. The amendments make it compulsory for members of each organization to join the other when transferring from stage to screen or vice-versa. They also make a new and eminently fair arrangement for the payment of dues, providing that an Equity member working in pictures shall be required to pay dues only to the Guild; the Guild taking upon itself the payment of such member's dues to Equity.

These new amendments mean that Equity strength will now be behind the Guild in the attainment of one of its main objectives: GUILD SHOP.

IN the future, all Equity members coming to pictures from the stage will be committed to join the Guild within thirty days after signing a contract for motion picture work or within thirty days after acting in motion pictures. Failure to abide by these rules will bring about the player's suspension from Equity for an indefinite period.

The same rule applies to all Equity members now working in pictures. If not already members of the Guild, they must join it within thirty days or face suspension from Equity. Guild officers are expecting that Equity members will voluntarily join the Guild upon receipt of their notices from Equity.

Unfortunately, a certain amount of confusion resulted in the November bills to Equity members. This was due to the fact that the amendments were adopted so speedily, that the Equity Council did not have time to notify its members, who are also Guild members, that dues should be paid only to the Guild.

Following is the full text of the amendments; please read carefully:

### MODIFICATION OF AGREEMENT OF AFFILIATION OF SCREEN ACTORS' GUILD, INC. WITH ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

Agreement entered into between the Actors' EQUITY ASSOCIATION and CHORUS EQUITY ASSOCIATION, both voluntary associations organized under the laws of New York, hereinafter jointly called "Equity," and SCREEN ACTORS GUILD, INC., a California non-profit, membership corporation, herein-after called the "Guild".

WHEREAS, the parties hereto entered into an agreement dated November 15, 1934, entitled "Affiliation of Screen Actors Guild, Inc. with Actors' Equity Association and Chorus Equity Association"; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the said parties to modify the said agreement as hereinafter set forth,

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties do hereby agree as follows:

(1) Paragraph 6 of the agreement of November 15, 1934, hereinabove referred to, is hereby amended to read as follows:

"(6) Members of the Guild who are also members of Equity shall be required to pay dues to the Guild only, and shall be relieved of all Equity dues and of all arrearages in Equity dues up to but not after January 1, 1936.

"From and after January 1, 1936, the Guild will pay to Equity dues for every member of the Guild in good standing who is also a member of Equity (other than Junior Guild members) and Equity agrees to look solely to the Guild for the payment of such dues. Dues from the Guild to Equity will be paid semi-annually, on May 1st and November 1st, at the rate of \$15.00 per annum for each member of the Guild whose dues to the Guild are paid at the rate of \$30.00 per annum, and at the rate of \$18.00 per annum for each such member of the Guild whose annual dues are paid at a rate higher than \$30.00 per annum. Equity shall have the option to require payment by the Guild of dues of \$18.00 for each such member regardless of the rate at which he pays dues to the Guild from and after the 1st day of January, 1937.

"Where Junior Guild members are not working in motion pictures but are working in the theatre, such members shall not be required to pay dues to the Guild and the Guild shall have no obligation to pay such member's dues to Equity. Where Junior Guild members are not working in the theatre but are working in motion pictures, neither such member nor the Guild will be required to pay Equity dues for such member.

"The Guild may determine when and under what conditions said Junior member shall be

(Continued on Page 28)

JUNIOR GUILD NEWS WILL BE FOUND ON PAGE 30



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**Myron Selznick & Company, Inc.**

AGENCY

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# Writers' Guild

(Continued From Page 14)

Reservations are in order, now. First reservations will receive spot positions. Get your's in today! And be there for the Guild's second Christmas charivari!

## McCall on Magazine Committee

MISS Mary C. McCall, Jr. has been added to the Magazine Committee for The Screen Writers' Guild, bringing the total to four. Nunnally Johnson, Robert N. Lee and Harlan Thompson are the other members.

## When Advertising

ONCE more the Guild wishes to remind its members to include the line, "Member of The Screen Writers Guild" in all advertisements appearing in the trade press. While the use of the statement may seem repetitious, it is this feature that makes it valuable.

In the past month, most members have used the legend. As a result, the fact that more than ninety percent of screen writers are Guild members is being impressed on others in the industry. When this fact finally is driven home, the Guild will have achieved one of its main objectives. And each member can assist merely by including the line in his advertising.

## Rogers Memorial Fund

DEPUTIES at the various studios have, during the past month, acted for the Guild in the collection of monies for the Will Rogers Memorial fund. When finally collected, the money will be presented to the Fund from The Screen Writers' Guild and the individual members contributing.

## Discount Available On Stenographic Service

DISCOUNTS that mean an appreciable saving in all stenographic work are available to Guild members through its stenographic service affiliation. These discounts can be obtained on typing, mimeographing, stenographers, secretaries and all other stenographic services.

Call the Guild office, GL. 4181, for prompt and efficient attention to your requirements.

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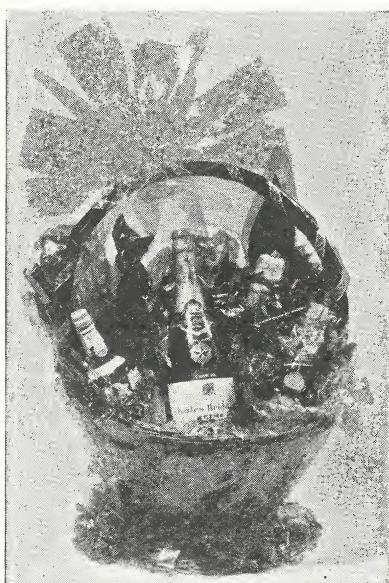
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### The Ideal Christmas Basket

... Only the Very Finest of Imported Liquors and 17 yr. old Bonded Whiskies . . . Baskets Range from \$15.00 up . . .

## An Answer from Elmer Rice

(Continued from Page 1)

the reclassification board of the Federal Theatre Project declares them eligible in other respects.

Very truly yours,

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION  
(signed) by Frank Gillmore.

THEATRICAL PROTECTIVE UNION NO 1.  
(signed) by James J. Brennan.

UNITED SCENIC ARTISTS OF AMERICA.  
(signed) by Fred Marshall.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF ACTORS.  
(signed) by Ralph Whitehead.

AMERICAN DRAMATISTS.  
(signed) by Luise Silcox.

NEW YORK NEWSPAPER GUILD.  
(signed) by Carl Randau.

I. A. T. S. E., LOCAL NO. 306.  
(signed) by Herman Gilber.

EMPIRE STATE MOTION PICTURE OPERATORS UNION, Inc.  
(signed) by Richard Baron.

HEBREW ACTORS' UNION, INC.  
(signed) by Reuben Guskin.

ALLIANCE OF THEATRICAL STAGE EMPLOYEES & MOV-

ING PICTURE MACHINE OPERATORS OF U. S. AND CANADA.

(signed) by George E. Brown.

As you see, it is signed by every union having workers in the theatrical field, the aggregate memberships of these unions being about fifty thousand. The modification asked for in this letter would make it possible to employ many needed theatre people who have either been reluctant to go on Home Relief or who, for some reason, are not eligible for Home Relief.

I think that when all these facts are taken into consideration, you will have a somewhat different picture to the one presented in your editorial. This is not intended as a criticism, since I know how difficult it is to convey clearly and accurately what we are trying to do and I can readily see how easy it is to draw incorrect inferences.

Mrs. Flanagan and I have been devoting practically all our time for the last five or six months to formulating the plans for the Federal Theatre Project. We have been chiefly concerned with providing dignified and creative work for theatre workers whereby, under good direction and humane working conditions, they could recover their morale and self-respect and eventually re-establish for themselves a place in the professional theatre. In addition, we hope by producing plays at low admission prices, to attract to the theatre hundreds of thousands of young people who cannot afford the prevailing prices and who must be introduced to the art of the theatre if we are to have any future audience at all. I hope you will forgive the length of this letter. It is merely that I want to place before you all the pertinent facts.

Very truly yours,

(signed) ELMER RICE,

Regional Director for New York Federal Theatre Project.

P. S. Incidentally, may I congratulate you upon the great improvement in the SCREEN GUILDS' MAGAZINE? I am glad to see it concentrating on serious, hard-hitting articles.

**HAND  
the  
Hatter**

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Hats Cleaned and  
Reblocked  
Silks, Operas, Cow-  
boy and Ladies' hats  
our specialties

HEmpstead 7840

Hollywood

## The Dramatists' Guild Shop

(Continued from Page 4)

tive bidding for the rights, with the full facts of the transaction out in the open, have assured a fair, honest sale, a complete accounting and full payment to the author. The Basic Agreement gives the playwright full control of the script, with any changes his own property, approval of the cast, and other such rights.

A play is now sold for American production only, instead of giving the manager world rights, and additional advances are required if English and other foreign rights are granted. In case of disputes, instead of the long, tortuous legal processes with their heavy costs, prompt arbitration for a nominal fee has been substituted. It used to be a commonplace experience for the manager to hold up royalties, or for a show to fold up leaving royalties unpaid, but this is now happily rare as the Guild moves promptly to enforce collections.

The most important change of all that has come about due to the Guild and the adoption of a standard contract is a complete reversal of the relative positions of manager and author. As I said, it used to be taken for granted that when an author signed a contract, the play was the manager's property, though the author did have an equity in it. Now it is the author's play. The manager will have an interest if he fulfills certain obligations, but it is still the author's play. I think from the point of view of their self-respect that it is important authors should have this feeling about their plays.

When we negotiate a basic contract, or when we negotiate an individual contract, we are not asking concessions from the producers. We are asking recognition of a fundamental conception, that it is the author's play. But only through the Guild shop has such recognition come about, and should the Guild ever go out of existence, playwrights will be sold down the river again unless they organize for their own interests. My experience could be matched by a dozen others.

I helped to organize the Dramatists' Guild as we know it today and had my part in the strike which brought about the signing of the first Minimum Basic Agreement with managers ten years ago. Though managers may sigh for the good old days, I do not. I have watched the steady growth of the Guild and its persistent, day-by-day work in holding managers in line and enforcing dramatists' rights and I think without question it justifies its purpose.

## 1st Anniversary Sale

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# The Invasion of Broadway by Picture Money

(Continued From Page 5)

to return—an urge so strong that they are willing to sacrifice their big salaries. I might add, in all justice to the actors, that this *has* happened, but very, very seldom.

The use of Picture Money in the Theatre may result in shorter runs for plays in New York. Undoubtedly it will destroy all chances for a revival of the "Road." All that the Studios are interested in is pictures so naturally they are more than apt to use their influence to secure an early closing for a

play they have backed, in order to release it for pictures.

It is not unlikely that Picture Money will inspire some authors to write plays with a sole eye to the requirements of the films. These would unquestionably be young authors. They do not realize that there is no obligation or necessity to "write for pictures." The Studios will buy almost any play that is a success—because it *is* a success; regardless of the subject. They buy failures, too. The seasoned dramatist knows all this. He knows furthermore, that if he hampers the working of his imagination by restricting it to so-called Picture stuff (meeting its narrow gauge of censorship and what the Executives think the public wants) he will be unable to write a play he would put his name to.

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I HAVE heard writers say that the time is not far off when the Pictures will dominate the Theatre entirely and compel playwrights to write only the sort of plays the Studios call for. But this is only a state of hysteria induced by fear that such a state could actually come to pass. I deny emphatically that it could.

If plays were written according to the ideals of the current cinema editorship, there would be no Theatre audiences. They would melt away in a single night and never return to a theatre that offered them the diluted and commonplace fare of the Screen.

It is inevitable that the Pictures will eventually realize that their salvation lies in preserving the originality of the authors' ideas. At the moment, they are shy of originality, and yet they buy it, even though they ultimately destroy the very thing they have bought.

This is the rock on which the hope of satisfactory adjustment between the Pictures and the Dramatists splits. I am, however, sanguine that the future will see that adjustment an accomplished fact.

The Dramatist is human; he wants access to that pot of gold at the end of the Hollywood rainbow—the money to produce his plays, but he will not accept that backing at the price of his literary integrity, his self-respect, his loyalty to his art—all secured to him under the Basic Agreement. The sooner the Pictures come to a realization of this fact, the sooner will the way be cleared for the proper functioning of Picture Money in the legitimate and indispensable Theatre.

## Portrait of a Playwright

(Continued from Page 9)

But now he's bitter. At forty, he's found the whole thing—the lead stories in the Sunday drama sections, the full-page photographs in *Vanity Fair* and *The Stage*, the biographical pieces in *Who's Who In The Theatre*, the Burns Mantle average he's maintained—he's found the whole thing empty. His second wife could have saved him, he thinks, if she hadn't become tired of his practical jokes; his friends could have saved him if they hadn't kept saying, "your next one better be good, Pal"; his enemies could have saved him if they hadn't been so eager to praise.

HIS current effort is scheduled for Spring. It was tried out in Atlantic City and didn't look too hot. The Theatre today confuses him a little. He can't understand how "Jumbo" and "Dead End" can be a success in the same season. His own show is built on what Time calls "agitprop." He has come to the conclusion that if the Theatre is going to succeed at all—for him, at any rate—it must reflect our turbulent political times. In short, it must be a "red" theatre. His wonderful ear and astounding memory have put down in bold, unashamed strokes the actual blood of these unvoiced slaves of Capital, he tells everyone who will listen.

And they do listen. Because he still is in the front rank of American writers, don't mistake that. His railing and ranting at Dramatist Guild meetings proves it. They listen there; the American press listens; the managers listen; but the ticket buyers, those low-lives, have heard Our Playwright a little too many times, perhaps. They don't listen as sincerely as they should.

He thinks about Hollywood these days, too, more than he did. He's assailed with the horrible fear that maybe pictures should take all of his time instead of dabbling in the shadow art and making Broadway his real headquarters. He's seen jobs like "The Informer" and "Tale of Two Cities" and thinks they're pretty good. The movie censorship thing drives him crazy, naturally, because he can't understand what Turkey has to do with "Musa Dagh," but he remembers that even censors must make a living and he dismisses it as some one else's worry.

Right now what he'd really like is to know something about growing kumquats on his San Fernando rancho, but when he thinks about it honestly and seriously, he always runs up against his own practical question: "Who the hell ever wrote a play about kumquats?"

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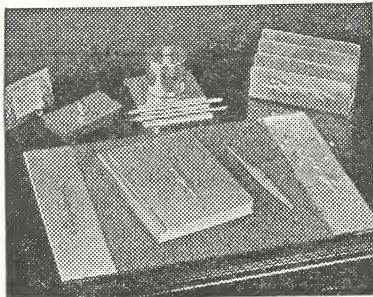
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## The Future of the American Theatre

(Continued From Page 10)

workers far, far less secure, if that is possible. It is worse today because it draws its economic breath from an economic world that is diseased. What is its future?

WE have some indications of the future of actors. Last year, and the years before during the four weeks of rehearsals they went without pay. Now, they are being paid; for at least part of the time. Not so long ago, they had no minimum wage. Today, there is a minimum wage. These are signs for the future.

Somewhere in his book Morton Eustis states that "thanks to the Dramatists' Guild . . . the playwright is the pampered child of the entire industry." Mr. Eustis doesn't think that ought to be. In a sense I agree with him. I don't think there ought to be any pampered children in the theatre. I think all theatre workers should be protected. If the playwright is more protected than the actor it is because his trade union is stronger. If the stage hand is more secure than the director it is because

the stage hand has a union and the director hasn't. Let all the theatre workers be pampered children if to pamper us means to give us a living wage.

For the future of the theatre look to the future of our economic order. Economic organization is on every memo. The big business men are organizing; trusts are organizing, banks, railroads, steamship lines are organizing, combining and strengthening their position. And labor, too, is organizing and uniting. There is growing a sharp division between those who own wealth and those who work for wages. The overtones of our time are having an unusual effect on professional workers, on artists, and petty tradesmen. They are discovering that they are workers to the same degree as bus drivers, plumbers, bricklayers. They are discovering that starvation pinches them with the same fingers it pinches the laborer. And the division in our economic life has a counterpart in our political life. We are worried about war. We are worried about its bedmate, fascism. We are getting together to see if we can do something about them.

In short, the spirit of our times and of the immediate future is one of conflict of forces, on one side, standing for a more equitable world, and on the other side, for the world as it is, or as it has been.

IF, as I said before, the theatre draws its economic breath from the economic world, then it draws its spiritual breath from its Siamese-twin, the spirit of the times.

The future of the theatre rests with the future of America. We need only to compare the theatre of Fascist Germany with the theatre of the Germany that went before. To make good our prophesy of the theatre's future, we have to predict America's future. I think we can do this. We can say with some certainty that America's future does not lie along the terrible and cruel trail of Fascism. It will not lie that way, however, only if all those who lose by Fascism, actors, playwrights, stage workers, all artists as well as plumbers, miners, and bus drivers, as well as the owner of the little neighborhood grocery store make sure that they are banded securely together, in trade unions, in voluntary associations, or what you will, dedicating their or-

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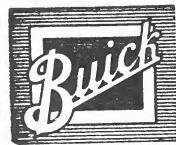
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ganized strength not only toward gaining better living conditions but also on the offensive against Fascism, oppression, and every one of its manifestations.

The immediate future of the American theatre will be more secure when it is entirely a union theatre.

The future of the American theatre art will be more secure in relation to its alertness in translating the spirit of its times to the stage.

### I Prefer the Screen

(Continued From Page 8)

had a home-made "Welcome" banner hung across the front door. Mrs. Arnold's birthday had occurred while we were away, and they chose the night we returned to celebrate. They had prepared a birthday cake for her, turkey and champagne. . . Is it any wonder I prefer motion pictures, when Hollywood has brought me all this?

Then there's the money. Perhaps I should write that in italics. For the first time I can do the things I want. For the first time I can have the home I've always dreamed about. I am providing for my family's security for the future. And I feel that in pictures I have a future, myself. I want nothing more.

### Books, Plays, Articles, Stories

**Anthony, Stuart**—"Come Angel Band" \* (Play) Lee Shubert.  
**Beranger, Clara**—"Behind the Scenes with Major Bowes"—Liberty Magazine.  
**Blochman, L. G.**—"Mrs. Macbeth"—Street & Smith's Complete Magazine.  
**McCarthy, James Remington**—"The Deadline" (Novel) Bobbs-Merrill Co.  
**Macaulay, Richard**—"Hard to Handle"—Saturday Evening Post.  
**Manners, William Gus**—"The Winged Serpent"  
**Nichols, Dudley**—"Come Angel Band" \* (Play) Lee Shubert.  
**Raphaelson, Samson**—"The Magnificent Heel" (Play) Alex Yoke. .. "Famous Plays of 1935" (Book) Victor Gollancz, London.  
"Mantle's Best Plays of 1934-1935" (Book) Dodd, Mead & Co.  
**Richman, Arthur**—"The Season Changes" (Play) Robert Milton.  
**Trumbo, Dalton**—"Eclipse" (Novel) Laval Dickson, London. "Five C's for Fever and Five"—Saturday Evening Post.  
**Ullman, Elwood**—"Football Next Season" Times Sunday Magazine.

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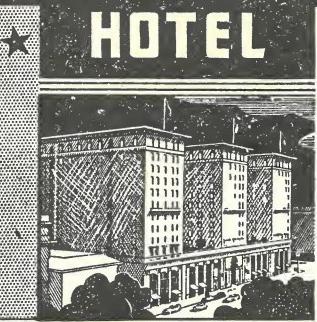
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## I'm in Favor of It

(Continued from Page 12)

tures is a puzzling thing to me. But I feel that it is true. Some actors say that playing to an audience accounts for it. I could challenge this by citing the crew of a picture company as an audience, and a critical one. But I think that the presence of a paying audience actually does make an actor "give" harder. Even audiences seem conscious of this inexplicable relationship. That is why "flesh" shows and personal appearances draw.

Or perhaps it is concentrating a performance into an almost continuous whole, as opposed to breaking it up into takes, that stimulates, gives a refreshed slant on characterization.

So far I have concerned myself with what the Theatre, (Theatre, mind you, with a capital T), can do for people whose livelihood is derived from pictures. There is another side. People whose livelihood is in pictures, I am sure, have something to give to the Theatre. There are picture directors who have never directed in the Theatre who may have a contribution of technique to make; there are actors who have never been behind the footlights who could,

I feel, contribute new interpretations of well remembered roles. And it is a Guild Theatre that should be the normal instrument of these contributions.

Yes, such a Theatre should go far in promoting both careers in pictures and careers on the stage. I agree with Mr. Ivan Simpson when he says that the Theatre is coming back. I don't think that it will ever threaten, ever even challenge pictures, commercially, but I do think that many of our good Guild members will find it to their advantage to have a really fine recent theatrical performance on their credits list. And it will be to their advantage not to have to pull up stakes and go three thousand miles and spend months of valuable time to get it.

As to the monetary compensation a Guild-backed house could offer, that, because of the Guild's prestige, because of the draw of picture names, and because of the excellence any Guild project would attain, should be ample without being "picture dough."

Anyhow, to an actor, the joy of being on call only three hours a day and never having a fine performance lost on the cutting room floor should be ample compensation for anything.

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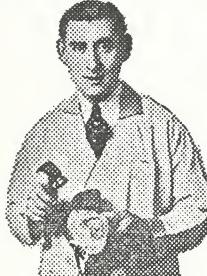
## Broadway's Summer Theatre

(Continued from Page 11)

The Jitney Players who as their name implies wander from resort to resort giving their repertory.

The most interesting away-from-Broadway theatre is, perhaps, The Hedgerow Theatre at Moylan-Rose Valley near Philadelphia. This organization is now in its thirteenth year of operations under the inspired direction of Jasper Deeter. Its most notable production this year was the Edwin Piscator version of *An American Tragedy*. This group founded originally as a summer stock company, is now the country's single repertory company.

THE summer theatre is of infinite value as a training ground for the inexperienced, green actor. Many thespian aspirants unable to persuade the astute Broadway managers of their worth, are hereby given an opportunity to display their wares. Out of stock companies have emerged actors who have been acclaimed on Broadway. A summer stock company usually consists of a resident group of about six actors able to play the variety of roles they are called upon to portray during a summer's work. It is the customary practice to recruit the services of a well-known actor to appear as the guest star. This star, as a rule, plays the role he or she has just finished on Broadway. Thus Ina Claire appears in *Ode to Liberty*, Ruth Gordon in *Three-Cornered Moon* and Irene Purcell in *Accent on Youth* at various summer stands. Summer theatres have had as their guest stars such celebrated actors as Ethel Barrymore, Laurette Taylor, Maude Adams (who played at Ogunquit, but would not return to Broadway) Osgood Perkins, June Walker, Ernest Truex, etc. Alice Brady played *The Road to Rome* at Red Bank, New Jersey. In this company also appeared Jean Arthur, Rosalind Russell and Ross Alexander.



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Stars whose regular professional salary amounts to four figures are content with a scant hundred, or at the most one hundred and fifty dollars a week at the summer companies. The resident members usually receive Equity's minimum of forty dollars. Most actors are only too happy to be assured of this income during the Broadway off-season. Despite the fact that they only have one short week to get up their lines, the actors regard the summer interlude as a welcome holiday.

Life offers nothing so hectic as the scene presented on Monday morning in a stock company. On Monday a frantic stage-crew dismantles the old scenery of the bill of the week preceding, and move in the setting for the play opening that night. Frenzied actors run about seeking the missing parts to their costumes, while a dismayed director tries to organize his scattered company for a final rehearsal. It is a miracle that the curtain goes up on time. But there is a tradition that it does. Where everything seemed a hopeless muddle a moment before, however, all is in order at the advertised curtain time.

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- M.—Music.
- \*—In Collaboration.

**Adamson, Ewart**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "The Walking Dead" O\*, A, C, D.  
**Chesterfield**—"The Last Trap" A, C, D.  
**Anderson, Doris**—**Universal.**  
 "Next Time We Live" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Avery, Stephen Morehouse**—**United Artists (Pickford-Lasky)**  
 "Monsieur Sans Gene" A, C, D.  
**Baker, Melville**—**Universal.**  
 "The Next Time We Live" A, C, D.  
**Block, Ralph**—**Reliance - United Artists.**  
 "Last of the Mohicans" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Branch, Houston**—**Walter Wanger Prod.**  
 "Big Brown Eyes" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Buchman, Harold**—**Columbia.**  
 "Smart Sister" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Buckley, Harold**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "Public Enemy's Wife" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Burger, Paul**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 "Public Nuisance No. 1" O\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Chanslor, Roy**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "The Hometowners" A, C, D.  
**Cole, Lester**—**Republic Prod.**  
 "Tiger Valley" A\*, C\*, D\*, M\*, L\*.  
**Connelly, Marc**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "The Green Pastures" A, C\*, D.  
**Cooper, Olive**—**Republic.**  
 "Dancing Feet" D.  
**Dawn, Isabel**—**Walter Wanger Prod.**  
 "The Moon's Our Home" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**DeGaw, Boyce**—**Walter Wanger Prod.**  
 "The Moon's Our Home" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Dix, Marion**—**Gaumont-British.**  
 "It's Love Again" O, C, D.  
**Dunne, Finley Peter, Jr.**—**Universal.**  
 "Dracula's Daughter" C, D.  
**Dunne, Philip**—**Reliance U. A.**  
 "The Last of the Mohicans" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Elišcu, Edward**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 "Every Saturday Night" A, C, D.  
**Felton, Earl**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "Circus Girl" O, A, C, D.  
**Fields, Herbert**—**Paramount (Universal Loan)**  
 "Spinster Dinner" C, D.

**Fields, Joseph**—**Walter Wanger Prod.**  
 "Palm Springs" A, C, D.  
**Finkel, Abem**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "Public Enemy's Wife" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Fitz-Richards, Arthur**—**Universal.**  
 "The Sun Never Sets" A, C, D.  
**Fitzsimmons, Cortland**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 "The Arkansas Traveller" O, A, C, D\*.  
**Franken, Rose**—**Pioneer.**  
 "American Rhapsody" O\*, A\*.  
**Gibbons, Eliot**—**Walter Wanger Prod.**  
 "Trail of the Lonesome Pine" C\*.  
**Universal**—"Men of Glory" A.  
**Gow, James**—**R.K.O.**  
 "Static" A\*.  
**Greene, Eve**—**Paramount.**  
 "Professional Lady" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Grey, John**—**R.K.O.**  
 "The Farmer in the Dell" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Gruen, James**—**Paramount.**  
 "Border Flight" A, C, D.  
**Hanneman, H. W.**—**Republic**  
 "House of a Thousand Candles" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Hartman, Don**—**Paramount.**  
 "Turn Off the Moon" O\*, A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Howell, Maude**—**Gaumont British.**  
 "Mister Hobo" A\*.  
**Hutchison, Jerry**—**R.K.O.**  
 "Fugitive Gold" C, D.  
**Jackson, Horace**—**M.G.M.**  
 "The Unguarded Hour" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Jamieson, Hazel**—**Universal.**  
 Edgar Guest Story, A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Johnson, Henry**—**Paramount.**  
 "F. Man" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Josephson, Julien**—**Columbia.**  
 Untitled story, A.  
**Krims, Milton**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "Anthony Adverse" D.  
**Larkin, John Francis**—**Paramount.**  
 "Imported From Paris" O.  
 "Daughters of Alma Mammy" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Lawson, John Howard**—**Columbia.**  
 "Purple and Fine Linen" A.  
**Lee, Robert N.**—**R.K.O.**  
 "Ivanhoe" A, C, D.  
**Lehman, Gladys**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 "Poor Little Rich Girl" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Levien, Sonya**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 Dionne Quintuplet Story, O, A, C, D.  
**Lippman, William R.**—**Walter Wanger.**  
 "Big Brown Eyes" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Lipscomb, W. P.**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 "Under Two Flags" A, C, D.  
**Loeb, Lee**—**Columbia.**  
 "Smart Sister" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**MacDonald, Wallace**—**Republic.**  
 "My Old Kentucky Home" A\*.

**Malloy, Doris**—**Paramount.**  
 "Too Many Parents" A, C, D.  
**Markey, Gene**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 "Commencement" A, C, D.  
**Markson, Ben**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "Ready, Willing and Able" A, C, D.  
**Marlow, Brian**—**Paramount.**  
 "Preview" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Meehan, Elizabeth**—**Republic.**  
 "The Harvester" C\*, D\*.  
**Meehan, John**—**M.G.M.**  
 "The Shining Hour" A, C, D.  
**Milne, Peter**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "The Walking Dead" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Mintz, Sam**—**R.K.O.**  
 "The Farmer in the Dell" A, C, D.  
**Morgan, Ainsworth**—**M.G.M.**  
 "The Gorgeous Hussy" A, C, D.  
**Murfin, Jane**—**Sam Goldwyn.**  
 "Come and Get It" A, C, D.  
**Nichols, Dudley**—**R.K.O.**  
 "Mary of Scotland" A, C, D.  
**North, Edmund**—**R.K.O.**  
 "Static" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**O'Brien, Edwin K.**—**C. C. Burr Prod.**  
 "Suicide Squad" D.  
**Paromore, E. E., Jr.**—**M.G.M.**  
 "The Suicide Club" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Parsons, Lindsley**—**Republic.**  
 "Sitting on the Moon" O.  
**Perez, Paul**—**Chesterfield.**  
 "The Little Red School House" O, A, C, D.  
**Rigby, Gordon**—**Republic.**  
 "Tiger Valley" A\*, C\*, D\*, M\*, L\*.  
**Rogers, Howard Emmett**—**M.G.M.**  
 "The Unguarded Hour" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Sayre, Joel**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 "Wooden Crosses" A, C, D.  
**Schary, Dore**—**Paramount.**  
 "Timothy's Quest" A, C, D.  
**Schubert, Bernard**—**M.G.M.**  
 "Salute to Glory" A, C, D.  
**Simmons, Michael L.**—**Paramount.**  
 "The Duchess" A\*.  
**Smith, Paul Gerard**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 "Mediterranean Cruise" A, C, D.  
**Solow, Eugene**—**Walter Wanger Prod.**  
 "Sahara" O\*, A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Starling, Lynn**—**Walter Wanger Prod.**  
 "Brazen" A, C, D.  
**Sutherland, Sidney**—**Republic.**  
 "The Leavenworth Case" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Thompson, Harlan**—**Paramount.**  
 "Florida Special" A, C, D.  
**Trotti, Lamar**—**20th Century-Fox.**  
 "Gentle Julia" A, C, D.  
 "Ramona" A, C, D.  
 "Country Beyond" A, C, D.  
**Twiss, John**—**R.K.O.**  
 "The Witness Chair" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Trumbo, Dalton**—**Warner Bros.**  
 "Prison Farm" A, C, D.  
 Untitled Mystery, O, A, C, D.  
**Unger, Gladys**—**R.K.O.**  
 "Little Dorrit" A.  
**Veiller, Anthony**—**R.K.O.**  
 "The Indestructible Mrs. Talbot" A\*, C\*, D\*.  
**Wagnner, George**—**Universal.**  
 "Tomorrow Is a Better Day" C, D.  
**Wilson, Carey**—**M.G.M.**  
 Marx Bros. Original, O\*.  
**Yost, Dorothy**—**R.K.O.**  
 "The Puzzle of the Briar Pipe" A, C, D.

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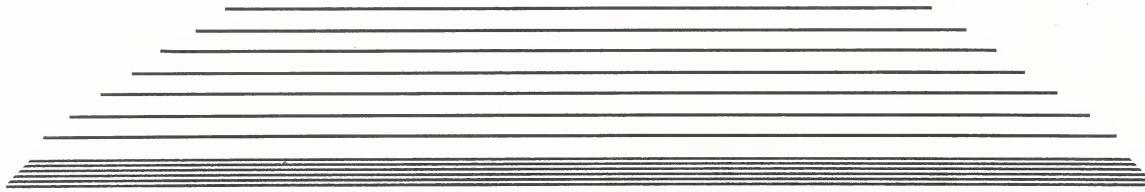
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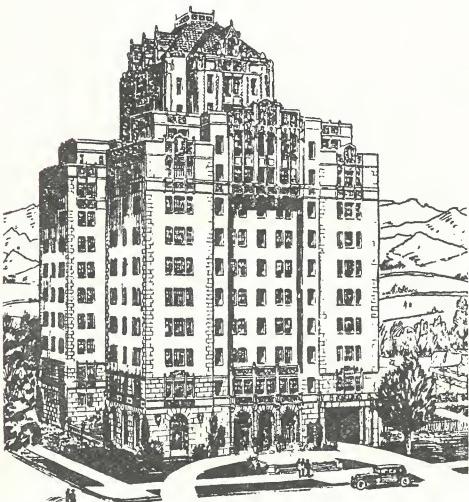
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## Amended Equity Contract

(Continued from Page 15)

deemed to be working in motion pictures, and Equity may determine when and under what conditions said Junior member shall be deemed to be working in the theatre.

"A paid up Equity member who has not and is not making his living in motion pictures and who desires to join the Guild will not be required to pay initiation fees and dues to the Guild until after he enters the motion picture field and until the next succeeding May 1st or November 1st, whichever is the nearer date. During the period during which these members are exempt from paying dues to the Guild, the Guild shall not be responsible to Equity for such dues.

"Except as above provided, Equity will admit to membership members of the Guild only if paid up, and the Guild will admit to membership members of Equity only if paid up.

"Any charter provisions with which this paragraph conflicts are hereby waived."

(2) Paragraph 7 of said agreement is hereby amended to read as follows:

"(4) Members of Equity acting in motion pictures will be required by Equity to join the Guild within thirty days after any such member shall make or execute a contract requiring him to act in a motion picture, or within thirty days after the first day such member actually acts in such motion picture, whichever shall occur the sooner. Equity agrees that any Equity member acting in motion pictures failing or refusing to join the Guild within such time or resigning from the Guild thereafter, if still acting in the motion picture field, will be suspended from Equity for an indefinite period, such suspension to commence as of the time when such member of Equity actually returns to the stage, and shall under no circumstances become effective before the first day upon which, by reason of contract or otherwise, such member is required to or does actually appear upon a stage in a legitimate theatre. Such period of suspension shall be terminated only by the mutual agreement of Equity and the Guild.

"Members of the Guild acting on the legitimate stage, now or hereafter, will be required by the Guild to join Equity forthwith on entering on employment in the theatre, and the Guild agrees that any Guild member failing or refusing to join Equity while acting on the legitimate stage, or resigning from Equity thereafter if still acting on the legitimate stage, will be suspended from the Guild for an indefinite period, such suspension to commence immediately and to be terminated only by the mutual agreement of Equity and the Guild. Otherwise, members of either organization will not be required to join the other.

"The question of fact as to whether or not a member of Equity has failed or refused to join the Guild or has resigned therefrom, shall be determined by the Council of Equity in accordance with its Constitution and By-Laws. The question of fact as to whether or not a member of the Guild has failed or refused to join Equity or has resigned therefrom, shall be determined by the Board of Directors of the

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Guild in accordance with its Constitution and By-Laws."

(3) Paragraph 8 of the said agreement is hereby amended to read as follows:

"(8) The suspension of a member from either organization shall entail suspension from both organizations, and discipline (including fines and penalties) imposed upon members of either organization shall be respected and enforced by both. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Equity shall immediately furnish the Guild its suspended list of members, and such members shall not be admitted to the Guild without the consent of Equity. This paragraph will not require the suspension or discipline of existing members of either organization for past offenses, or delinquency in the other organization. This paragraph will not require the Guild to suspend Junior members not working in the theatre who have not paid their Equity dues, nor Equity to suspend Equity members who are Junior Guild members not working in motion pictures who have not paid their Guild dues."

(4) Except as hereinabove set forth the agreement of November 15, 1934, hereinabove referred to, shall not be modified or changed in any particular and all of its provisions will remain binding upon all parties hereto until the final approval and signing of this agreement. This agreement shall be construed liberally to effectuate its purpose, and shall become binding only when it is approved in the manner provided by the respective constitutions and by-laws of all three organizations. When so approved, the respective organizations will pass all necessary legislation and take all necessary and desirable steps to carry out and enforce the same.

Dated November 19, 1935.

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

By (signed) Frank Gillmore, President.  
By (signed) Paul Dulzell, Executive  
Secretary.

CHORUS EQUITY ASSOCIATION,

By (signed) Frank Gillmore, President.  
By (signed) Dorothy Bryant, Executive  
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By (signed) Robert Montgomery,  
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By (signed) Kenneth Thomson,  
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DURING the past month, Guild members working for independent companies were apprised of the value to them of the organization in two instances. We reproduce the report of these incidents here because we feel they should prove of general interest.

On November 14, non-union sound men were discovered working with union sound men on a set for C. C. Burr at San Pedro. The Transportation Drivers Union and the Electrical Workers Union called their men off the set. With them went the sound trucks, prop trucks and transportation cars, stranding the company.

Before the transportation drivers left with their cars, Mr. Touhy, business agent for the Transportation Drivers Union, asked the actors if they were Guild members. Four of the actors stepped forward and said they did not believe in unions.

(Continued on Next Page)

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In answer, Mr. Touhy said, "That's all I want to know. Get yourselves and junk out of those cars and walk home. There are limousines to take home all men having Guild cards."

ON the same day, a similar incident took place on a set for the Halperin Brothers in Laguna. Mr. Touhy was informed by the actors that they walked from their hotel over a mile to location and back again.

Mr. Touhy immediately informed the production manager that he would send down a bus to take care of the actors, and the producer would pay the costs. If the producer refused, the company would be pulled off.

As a result, busses stood by to accommodate the actors during the balance of the location work.

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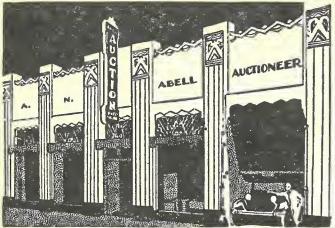
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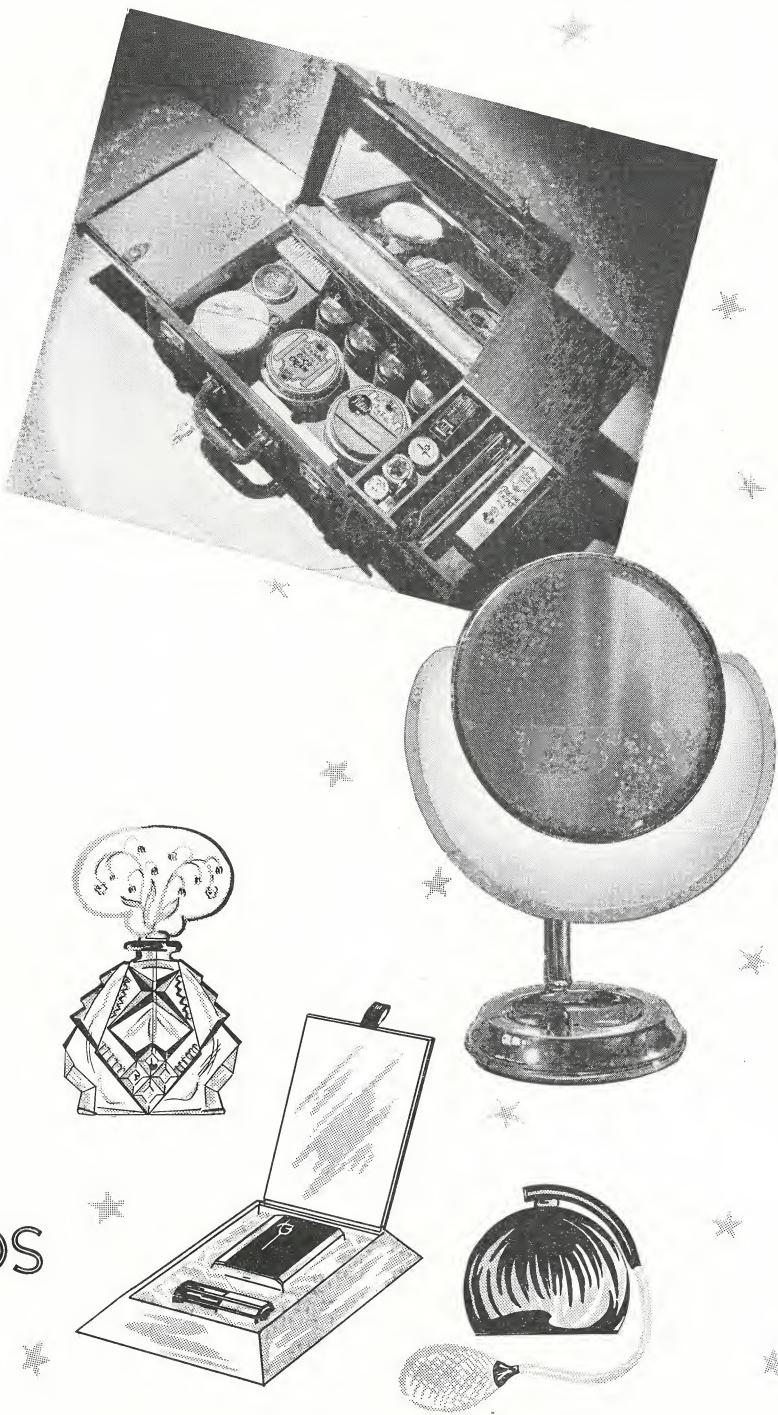
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